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SUBJECT: USAU: AU PSC MINISTERIAL TO ADDRESS DRC, SOMALIA,
AND MAURITANIA

REF: STATE 128088

Classified By: Ambassador John Simon, reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (U) Summary: The African Union's Peace and Security Council (PSC) will hold a ministerial meeting on December 22 to address the situations in Eastern Congo, Somalia, and Mauritania. At this point, ministers from Zambia, Ethiopia, Algeria, Nigeria, and Gabon are expected to attend. The current chair of the PSC, Zambian Ambassador Patrick Sinyinza, indicated there exists much uncertainty regarding the outcome of the meeting. USG should consider reaching out to member countries, particularly those sending ministers, to influence the results of the session. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Ambassador paid a visit to the Zambian Ambassador Sinyinza on December 17 to discuss his expectations for the upcoming PSC Ministerial. Sinyinza had recently returned from his home country where he had hosted a retreat with fellow PSC members to discuss PSC interaction with Civil Society (the outcome of this retreat, the Livingstone Framework, will soon be made public) and is only now focusing his attention on the upcoming ministerial. The agenda for this PSC had been set at the beginning of the month when Zambia assumed the chair, and the fact that it will be a ministerial is the result of Nigerian pressure at that time. As he had in his previous meeting with the Ambassador, Sinyinza expressed interest in the USG positions on the three agenda items) Eastern Congo, Somalia, and Mauritania.

¶3. (C) On the Eastern Congo, Sinyinza noted that many on the Council thought it was too early for the AU to address this issue, given the activity of so many other players, such as UN Special Representative Obasanjo and the regional organizations. However, he thought the AU had been silent too long on the subject. Ambassador delivered the reftel points, which were well received by the Chair. He only questioned whether political dialogue with the GRDC had anything to offer General Nkunda and the CNDP given their recent military victories and if it was possible to deny artisanal mining revenue to the negative forces in Eastern Congo) he certainly did not think the FARDC could do so.

¶4. (C) On Somalia, Sinyinza was decidedly negative. He expressed frustration with the infighting of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and concern that without the Ethiopian forces in Somalia, the AMISOM troops will be overrun. He predicted the ministerial meeting would be limited to receiving reports of actions in the TFG Parliament, UN, International Contact Group, etc. When the Ambassador suggested the need for concrete actions to support the African Union Commission's efforts to save AMISOM, Sinyinza noted the PSC could condemn the actions of President Yusuf, in line with the recent statement of Chairperson Ping,

but he doubted there would be any specific sanctions against him. He also thought the PSC could call for a UN peacekeeping operation. He said: &Somebody has to crank the system, and that is the UN. The AU,s spirit is willing, but it lacks sufficient resources to make a difference.8 He noted that at the beginning of AMISOM, the Ugandan troops were not getting paid. When the Ambassador noted the AMISOM mandate is due to expire in January, Sinyinza said it was possible the PSC could renew it at the ministerial, but thought that the issue was likely too &complex8 to address at this meeting.

15. (C) On Mauritania, Sinyinza agreed wholeheartedly with the Ambassador,s assessment that the AU needed to hold firm to its strong position against the coup, and seemed to concur that this required concrete actions at the December 22 ministerial, though he had not considered as of yet what actions the PSC might take. The Ambassador mentioned the options he had heard previously from Peace and Security Commissioner Lamamra, which included a travel ban, giving the Mauritanian seat at the Summit to the legitimate President, and asking the UN Security Council to be seized with the matter. The Chair did not think a travel ban would negatively affect the coup leaders much, since as Generals &they rarely travel,8 but he was intrigued by the other measures.

16. (C) Comment: The outcome of the PSC ministerial meeting on December 22, the last before the new year, is still very much in play. Outreach to the PSC member countries, particularly those sending ministers, could influence the results. Ambassador is scheduled to see

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Commissioner Lamamra on December 19, the Commissioner's first day back in the office after his trip to New York for the UN discussions on Somalia, and will press him on how he intends to make this ministerial meeting productive.
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